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Moring, Tom

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1. Introduction

Grounded in media studies, this chapter discusses how different minority languages are served by the media in various contexts. It specifically addresses how the needs of minority language speakers are fulfilled by the media in different languages. A pertinent issue in this context is how users of minority languages consume media in various languages in the emerging digital media ecosystem. Our focus on minority languages can contribute to many aspects of research on language contact, such as issues of language conflict, methodologies useful for studying language contact, language standardization, language shift, and language planning, policy, and politics. This focus is particularly interesting, as minority language speakers often have more varied language skills and needs (which they fulfill through their daily media habits) than the 'average' mainstream media consumer. Furthermore, minority languages tend to be more threatened than nurtured by the media, as a result of varied and asymmetric language contacts.

2. Development of media research from a language perspective

Current media research often relies on methods rooted in linguistics. The examples are manifold: close reading, discourse analysis, rhetoric, argumentation analysis, and others, all of which allow the researcher to analyze the content aspects of media. Studies combining media and language contact also frequently lean on policy research, including aspects of the regulatory frameworks that affect media supply and consumption and/or of the economic considerations that affect how media can reach different socioeconomic and linguistic environments (for a general overview, see Browne and Uribe-Jongbloed [2013]). Interestingly, all these aspects are in a state of flux today, as the media are undergoing a profound process of change. This change could be called a second Gutenberg revolution: the evolution of a global sociodigital space that fosters new intersections between the human mind and virtual intelligence.

When placing language contact in the field of media research, it is useful to remember the role that the media have played in creating, promoting, and excluding linguistic communities. In Europe in particular, broadcasters assumed the role of national—indeed if not, of nation-building—institutions. Broadcasters became gatekeepers for languages spoken within these nations. This could include a recognition of multilingual realities (Moring and Husband 2007). Smaller language groups, however, such as the Sámi in the Nordic states, were not automatically included in this national arena, but slowly had to work their way in.

In the 1970s and 1980s, terms such as 'cultural imperialism' (Demont-Heinrich 2011; Tomlinson [1991] 2001), 'dependency theory' (Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur 1976), 'marginalization', and 'new ethnicity' (Hall 1997) emerged. Western and globalized media were seen as spreading Western and US values and languages with little or no regard for local needs, thereby posing a severe threat to local cultures and languages. In the 1990s, however, the local and regional opportunities offered by the media began receiving more attention. For example, by introducing the concept of 'sphericules', Gitlin (1998) explained how regional cultures (such as Latin American or Egyptian) could create public spheres of their own based on a regionally shared language (Spanish or Arabic, respectively). The media could thus become an avenue for strengthening local and regional languages and cultures, instead of threatening them. This idea has been further strengthened by

researchers of minority language and minority ethnic media through their perspectives on the role of the media in smaller linguistic communities (e.g. Cottle 2000).

In the current decade, however, we increasingly seem to be in a situation where language contact has become, if not a threat, then at least a double-edged sword. Recent studies have shown, for example, how controlling the 'proper' use of a national language has become difficult in the age of the Internet and social media (e.g. Blackwood 2013), and how English has become a normalized part of promoting media content in non-English-speaking communities (e.g. Hilgendorf 2013). Given that every individual can be a producer of media content today, the question becomes whether we are moving towards a reality of linguistic 'super diversity' within the media field.

However, it is important to emphasize that, even amongst minority language communities, realities differ dramatically. While some minority languages have access to an orthography recognized by technology as well as technological means, other languages may have neither. According to UNESCO, about one third of all languages of the world are endangered, and about half of these are severely or critically endangered (Moseley 2010). It thus cannot be assumed that media as a tool are available in equal measure to all minority language groups.

3. Researching the effect of the media on minority languages

The topic of whether, or how, media affect languages has been widely debated (Androutsopoulos 2014; Coupland 2014; Sayers 2014). Reports suggest that the media-language relationship is contingent upon broader societal relationships which need to be addressed in all their complexity. Explanations cannot be found in media alone (Coupland 2014; Sayers 2014). The operational conception of 'media' must be opened towards "an inclusive approach that encompasses institutions, technologies and practices of mediation as elements of the sociolinguistic condition of late-modern societies" (Androutsopoulos 2014: 247). Introducing the term "media linguistics", Cotter, Perrin, and Whitehouse (2017: 3) argue that "language and media research […] is necessary and essential to understanding language in its role in society and in terms of its creative—and limiting—potential". Among the many different functions that media/language dynamics can perform, Androutsopolous (2017) points to the particular ideological influence of the media on motivation(s) for minority language use, and to theoretical models and frameworks for understanding said influence.

The powerful effect of passive access to a second language through viewing television and/or playing video games has already been confirmed by many studies (Kuppens 2010). However, with browsing, information seeking, interacting through social media, and other forms of interpersonal contact-seeking on the Internet, the daily use of second language(s) has changed considerably. Media interfere in more and more dimensions of daily life, and especially in the lives of young adults. Time spent on various media is increasing rapidly. For instance, through multitasking on different devices, the total use-time of media and communications in the UK in 2014 had reached an average of over 11 hours daily, with even more alarming figures for the most media savvy cohort of 16–24-year-olds (Ofcom 2014).

Early authorities in the field of minority language retention, such as Fishman (2001: 473) and others, exercised considerable influence on interest in researching minority language media, having found that mass media tend to undermine endangered languages rather than support them. Fishman also aired a skepticism regarding the media's potential impact on language revitalization. Cormack (2007: 62) proposed a different route of inquiry that was based on media's negative impact, questioning "[i]n what ways [different media can] interact with other aspects of language use to contribute, directly or indirectly, to language maintenance in specific communities".

In response to an initiative of the Norwegian Sámi radio and television (*NRK Sápmi*), a desk study (unpublished) was carried out in 2014 by Tom Moring with Elisabeth Wide at the Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki, which focused on different aspects of media effects on linguistic minorities. The study identified 75 articles that addressed the effects of media on language; however, hardly any were related to language contact. The articles discussed socialization and identity effects, as well as effects on second language learning, economic vitality, democracy, power, and language rights. They also discussed globalization, mediation, and mediatization, and the overall need for minority languages to develop digital

media. All these themes were connected by a common thread: the fact that media are part of everyday language *use*, and this evidently has effects, however, said effects have not been identified in detail.

Many studies have identified the effects—either direct or indirect—of language contact on language *maintenance* and *construction*. For example, Swedish journalists in Finland have attempted to positively influence the minority language through broadcast journalism. They strongly subscribe to a 'standard language ideology', while at the same time opening up the concept of standard language to a broader dialectal diversity (Stenberg-Siren 2018: 3). Lehtola (1997: 12, 92) argues that Sámi media have guarded the Sámi language against the dominance of the majority language by elaborating the Sámi language, by giving it presence in the public domain, and by deliberately reintroducing vocabulary and expressions that have been close to extinction. Pietikäinen (2008) found that the Sámi media are part of a hybridization process which is characteristic of the media landscape today. Pietikäinen (2008) and Markelin, Husband, and Moring (2013) report similar views on potential language impact and ambitions held by journalists who work for Indigenous peoples' media. This issue is, as all of the aforementioned researchers note, highly politicized, in the sense of both the political economy surrounding the media environment, as well as the rights and resources afforded to Indigenous peoples.

4. Media as a tool for language maintenance

Media workers in language communities that contain many languages—such as the Sámi communities, with nine Sámi languages and four majority languages—find themselves in a situation where linguistic choices must be made every day. Markelin, Husband, and Moring (2013) reported that many members within the Sámi media see themselves as linguistic workers as much as media workers. Some senior editors' comments on their roles *vis-à-vis* the Sámi language are given below:

> Well for me it's the Alpha and the Omega. Because I see myself as an important person in the Sámi society—or not person, but role, I have an important role. And when I watch my children grow up: they have Sámi as their home language, they speak Sámi as their first language in school, and they are pretty good at using the little Sámi content we have in the vast digital world. But at the same time I see that their language is so impoverished. So to me, the Sámi media and NRK Sápmi in particular, is a very, very, important foundation stone in preserving the language and culture. (Markelin, Husband, and Moring 2013: 109–110)

> For me the Sámi language is the foundation for Sámi identity. I am one of those who is quite sure that if the language disappears then the Sámi identity disappears as well. […] And this is the driving force [for me]; I want Sápmi to exist in 50 years and in 100 years and so on into the future. And then it is important that the Sámi language is alive. (Markelin, Husband, and Moring 2013: 109)

Media are thus seen as an essential tool for language maintenance and revitalization. However, about 70% of the Sámi people have lost their Sámi language as a result of active and/or passive suppression by dominant languages in their respective states of residence (Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia, e.g. Kuokkanen [2003]). The Sámi media are thus faced with a choice: should they serve the whole community, which would mean switching to a majority language that more or less everyone understands? Or should they first and foremost try to preserve the languages that still are in use? In Finland, for example, the Sámi broadcaster is still very much a (North) Sámi language broadcaster, while services in Finnish are a secondary priority. In Norway, on the other hand, different media are used to serve different linguistic audiences: radio for the Sámi speakers and Internet for the Norwegian speakers (Markelin and Husband 2007). Similar trends prevail in Sweden, where the public service broadcasters want the broadcasting license to focus on media *on* the minority cultures, whereas the government insists on media *in* their languages (Moring 2017). Media for minorities thus have to balance many roles.

5. The impact of minority language media on the status and recognition of the language

An effect of language contact that is difficult to measure is its political impact, i.e. the impact, in terms of attitudes, that minority or indigenous media have on majority populations. For example, broadcasts in indigenous languages of sporting events in Wales or Aotearoa, New Zealand, or Sámi television news broadcasts produced jointly by the Sámi television broadcasters, may reach hundreds of thousands of nonindigenous viewers. Although the impact of such broadcasts on the nonindigenous population is by no means comparable to the linguistic impact of majority media on the minority language community, it is likely that they improve the level of awareness. Such impact cannot be underestimated, as minority languages, to a large extent, rely on the goodwill of the speakers of majority languages.

In concrete terms, reaching nonspeakers may have specific effects: "'Ōiwi TV of Hawaii for example has noted an increased use of correct diacritical marks after they have entered the public sphere" (Markelin 2017: 453). The use of <ā> in New Zealand English has also been influenced by the media, with a similar effect. Furthermore, according to Ladd (2007: Conclusion):

> [t]hough the Māori language experienced a substantial decline in the nineteenth century and in [the] first half of the twentieth century, educators, linguists and writers have contributed to Te Reo Māori's renewal. Māori's formal recognition by the NZ government was accompanied by programs that aimed to increase the number of Māori speakers, and by a more prominent place in the arts and in the media. You can now listen to the news in Māori, read bilingual government documents, and peruse one of several anthologies of Māori verse; you can even download a program to spell-check your Māori prose.

Similar developments have taken place elsewhere. The Sámi language technology center at Tromsø University (*Sámi giellateknologiija guovddáš*) works on language technologies to support the learning, teaching, and use of the language, for example, by developing tools for language checks, text analysis, speech and grammar support, and electronic dictionaries for six different Sámi languages (Aikio-Puoskari and Sámediggi/Sámegiela doaimmahat 2016).

The development of such language technologies for the least-spoken minority languages actualizes yet another language contact perspective: we cannot neglect the effects of minority media within the minority language communities. Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes (2011: 56) note that the Irish *Raidió na Gaeltachta* promotes the "heteroglossia of Irish in terms of the main dialects". Yet while these dialects may be promoted within a joint radio broadcasting service, the situation is more complex in the context of the Sámi languages, many of which are not mutually comprehensible. Just as majority media influence minority language communities, larger minority language communities also influence smaller ones. In terms of the Sámi media, most of the Sámi language content is produced in the most widely spoken variant: North Sámi. Smaller Sámi language groups receive far less media services and are further marginalized in the public sphere (Markelin, Husband, and Moring 2013). However, previous interviews with indigenous media workers from around the world showed that dying languages, too, have a role to play in the media. Markelin (2017: 453) notes that "the symbolic power of language(s) remain a central part of identity even when it is no longer transmitted to the next generation, and this shines through in the media policies of Indigenous broadcasters".

6. A new ecosystem and the trilingual trap

The digitalization of communication has changed the ecosystem of language use. While certain features have become easier, such as establishing media platforms online, the digital realm has opened up a global communication marketplace that overthrows earlier regulatory policies. However, the market conditions for lesser used languages are crude: studies show a lag in the development of such media services online (Zabaleta et al. 2014).

Different types of media foster different patterns of use. Media use also varies according to social, age, gender, and regional differences. In developing media for minority languages, *substituting policies* (new media are expected to substitute old media) are a poorer choice than *additive policies* (new media are added to the supply; old media adjust their niche[s]). Minority language users are driven to majority language

services if the services in their own language fall short on any particular platform, as they often have sufficient command of the majority language.

This richness of language skills leads to more varied media consumption among minority language users. Vincze and Moring (2013: 52) have shown that speakers of Swedish in Finland are divided into three substantial groups in their linguistic preferences for browsing on the web: main preference is Swedish (44%), main preference is Finnish (32%), and main preference is English (24%). In contrast to this, speakers of the majority language (Finnish) prefer to browse the web in Finnish (92%), with a small group preferring English (8%). In a comparative study involving young Swedish speakers in Finland and young Hungarian speakers in Romania (16–17 years old), Vincze and Moring (2017) found similar patterns: a clear preference for browsing and using social media in English (over Swedish or Finnish) among the young in Finland, and evenly distributed preferences for both English and Hungarian when browsing and using social media among the young in Romania (over Romanian). Such trilingualism of minority language speakers may have far-reaching consequences for their language communities.

One of these is the tendency to migrate: between the years 2000 and 2015, almost 10% of the Swedish population in Finland moved abroad (two thirds of them to Sweden). According to Kepsu (2016: 4), the return rate among movers to Sweden is around 50%. Further, a considerable proportion of Indigenous people now live in urban spaces (Peters and Andersen 2013). This capacity to be 'all over the place' may be a positive factor for youth who have a rich language repertoire to fall back on. However, it may have negative consequences for the minority language community, as they are losing members of a linguistic community that is already under threat from such overwhelming language influx (most potently through the web).

7. Institutional completeness: a balancing act

The availability argument, i.e. the availability of media services in your own language, has become particularly relevant because of the current increase in globally accessible media content. The challenges faced by all smaller language communities are on the rise, as media of large language groups dominate the media landscape. This may challenge the *institutional completeness* of the (minority) media environment, and further erode *functional completeness* in media use (Moring 2007). Institutional completeness refers to access to media in a certain language, whereas functional completeness refers to the actual *use* patterns of services offered in the language. Few minority language media landscapes reach the level of institutional completeness that is achieved by Catalan and Basque in Spain (Gifreu 2009), German in South Tyrol, Swedish in Finland (Moring and Godenhjelm 2011), or Russian in various states that were previously part of the Soviet empire. Upgrading the institutional status of minority languages in the media sector is essential, though not sufficient, for languages that wish to become more functionally complete.

Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes (2011) discuss the development of minority language media in relation to three (overlapping) eras in language policies: gifting, service, and performance (see Ricento [2006]). *Gifting* refers to an era characterized by allocation of limited media space to a minority language by state-run media; the *service* era includes provision of a service to minority language speakers, with the goal of language revitalization; finally, media production in the *performance* era "explicitly makes use of the multilingual repertoires of the community and the target audience" (Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes 2011: 60).

According to Pietikäinen and Kelly-Holmes (2011: 63), "[…] the logic of the first era utilizes the norms of purity and monolingualism, the second welcomes also parallel multilingualism, and the third (to an extent) mixture and fluidity. This explains why, at the level of actually producing minority-language programmes, very different language policies may be adopted: from a majority- to a minority-language policy, and from parallel to heteroglossic multilingualism". Their study points to a new fluidity in an era where language contact is the rule rather than the exception, and where the media, too, adapt to a kind of 'hybridization' of cultures.

Recent studies show how vulnerable patterns of behavior related to language contact on the web may be a result of their contextual features. Johnson (2013) shows how fluent bilingual speakers of Welsh and English use their languages on Twitter. In the study, English messages slightly dominated the ones in Welsh (51% versus 41%), while less than 10% of the messages were in a mixed language. However, the numbers slightly favored Welsh when tweets were in response to others. In fact, speakers preferred Welsh when the

tweet was in response to other known biliterates (Johnson 2013: 108–109). However, Johnson (2013: 117) warns that "in terms of practical application, minority language users and supporters face challenges to discover methods in which Web 2.0 can work to the benefit of minority languages when they must compete against majority language resources, which, almost by definition, includes a greater number of speakers, resources for development of web portals, etc.".

On the basis of current developments in Irish, Sámi, and African languages, Kelly-Holmes (2014: 541) concludes that "[l]inked to a shift away from territorially-based speech communities […] has been an increasing commodification in relation to minority languages in the media. Here we can see a move from a rights based model to a lifestyle/consumption based model". Using the three language examples, she argues that the balance may tilt in favor of minority languages, as "new mediatized spaces create particular challenges and also opportunities for minority languages" (Kelly-Holmes 2014:541) that may take different forms of hybridity and cultural demarcation. She concludes that "[p]erformance is a keyword that […] perhaps best illustrates the particular constellations of technology, agency, practice and ideology that we are currently experiencing" (Kelly-Holmes 2014: 539).

Graffman (2014: 13), in a study commissioned by the Scottish BBC Alba and based on 25 qualitative interviews with young (10–19 years old) speakers of Scottish Gaelic, remarked that "young people have developed their own strategies for keeping themselves informed. Social media and peer-to-peer networks have great significance. It is often via their social networks that they obtain information, seeking further information on the basis of that. In Scotland, English is the main language when seeking information". On the web or on Skype, many of the interviewees also communicated in English with friends whom they knew to be Gaelic-speakers (Graffman 2014: 3).

Previously, due to spillover of the analog signals, broadcast services in minority languages of a particular state were also available in neighboring regions. Today, the digital space is confined within national borders for copyright reasons. Moring and Godenhjelm (2011) have shown how this problem particularly concerns minorities who speak the national languages of their smaller neighbor states (e.g. Danish in Germany, Swedish in Finland). The problem is not so significant for speakers of languages that are spoken by large populations with a global distribution of broadcasting (e.g. English, German, Russian, or French). Initiatives such as plans for a common digital space encompassing the entire EU could potentially have a favorable impact for all users of languages that are in official use in a neighboring state.

8. Discussion

The media, including increasingly web-based and social media, are today very much the locus of language contact. As we have seen, smaller languages are more vulnerable than larger ones in this reality. Therefore, we return to the question posed by Cormack (2007: 62), as quoted above: "In what ways can different media interact with other aspects of language use to contribute, directly or indirectly, to language maintenance in specific communities?"

Media studies show contradictory evidence about how media can contribute, given contextual conditions, to prevailing policies and resources available to linguistic communities. The digitalization of media has more or less revolutionized the spread of languages across borders and language groups. Studies show how we spend an increasing number of hours on one media device or another. Thus, the potential for language contact—be it with your own language, secondary, or tertiary languages—is considerable.

Research shows how language contact through the media is a double-edged sword for minority language communities. Young members of minority language communities—who are often tri- or even multilingual—can practice their language skills, for example, in English. Their multilingualism makes it easier for them to move, both domestically and internationally. Although rewarding at an individual level, this capacity may be problematic at a community level. Small language communities risk losing their vitality; the outside world may increase the vitality of a small community by providing new stimulus—but often at the cost of hybridization.

To help serve linguistic competence, minority language media need to be as functionally and institutionally complete as possible. Upgrading the institutional status of minority languages in the media sector is an essential, but not sufficient, policy measure for languages that wish to become more functionally

complete. Surveys among young people in minority language areas in Europe clearly indicate that many are abandoning their own language in favor of more widely spoken languages, be it the majority language or a *lingua franca* such as English. For minority language speakers, language contact through the media may thus be the equivalent of abandoning one's language.

Many media workers believe that their media institutions function as *language* institutions. Although clearly not the priority for all, maintenance and promotion of language is an important ambition for many media institutions and their employees. This is also the case in communities where a language is no longer widely used. Future research would do well to explore the interplay, over various media channels, between speakers of languages with different statuses.

Although the linguistic effects of this kind of language contact could be minimal (or nonexistent), the effects on attitudes and awareness could be all the more significant. Minority languages are in a disadvantaged position in relation to majority languages. Services to minorities are in many ways dependent upon the goodwill of the majority. Without awareness among majority language speakers about the existence and realities of minority language communities, the future of minority languages in the digital age is largely uncertain.

Presently, key issues are how digital language technologies, automatization in the production of media content, geo-blocking, and other aspects of digital humanities affect languages. These issues should be addressed, not just by linguists, but also by those engaged in research on language technology, as well as on the regulatory, economic, and political aspects of media. It is evident that the effort to form a viable cultural environment which is supportive of linguistic diversity and language contact is a multidisciplinary task, requiring efforts from researchers in many different fields.

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Tom Moring &

Lia Markelin, Helsinki (Finland)